



Peshtigo River State Forest



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources • Peshtigo River State Forest • N10008 Paust Lane • Crivitz, WI 54114 • www.dnr.wi.gov

Welcome to the Peshtigo River State Forest!

Established in 2001, the Peshtigo River State Forest was purchased from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS) to provide wood products and to protect the Peshtigo River watershed. The state forest currently includes roughly 9,000 acres of former WPS hydroelectric lands along the Peshtigo River and its flowages, in addition to another 3,000 acres of river bottom. The state forest will partner with WPS, and with many of the organizations that WPS partnered with, including Marinette County and the Town of Stephenson to provide recreational opportunities.

Know Your State Forests

The Peshtigo River State Forest joins five other properties, the Black River, the Brule River, the Flambeau River, the Governor Knowles and the Northern Highland–American Legion designated as State Forests. Together these properties comprise more than 430,000 acres, plenty of space to fish, hike and canoe in solitude.

State forests offer camping units, hundreds of miles of hiking and canoe trails, primitive and backpack camping areas, picnic grounds, thousands of acres of water to fish, plus numerous hunting opportunities. In many of the state forests, developed campsites are available. However for those who prefer to get away from it all, there are wilderness sites where you may be the only person on a pristine lake. In autumn, the pace slows offering excellent wildlife viewing and other sightseeing opportunities. During the winter months you can find snowmobile trails, ice fishing, cross country skiing, winter camping and snowshoeing may be available.

How is a northern state forest different than a state park? Within the Department of Natural Resources organization, a northern state forest receives its leadership and guidance from the Division of Forestry, whereas a state park receives its leadership and guidance from the Bureau of Parks and Recreation. A key difference between a state park and a northern state forest is recreation styles. A state park offers a more comfortable camping experience with running water, modern bathroom facilities, a moderate amount of sites with electricity, and the majority of sites available for reservations. At a northern state forest it is typically more rustic with only a minimal number of electrical sites and most sites have pit toilets and well water, however modern

bath facilities may be found. The majority of the campsites, some of the better ones, are not on the reservation system but are first-come first-serve only. A list of all campgrounds can be found at <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/>. From this page navigate using the left menu options through the following pages: Forest Lands, State Forests, and finally Recreational Opportunities. Look for a link titled: “State Forest Camping Fees”.

The last differences between a state park and a northern state forest may not be as obvious to the casual visitor as it is to those that live within the forest boundary. Logging and timber sales are a major source of revenue and part of the daily operations on a state forest. State forests practice “sustainable forestry” which means the land is managed according to its natural capability to provide a wide array of benefits for now and the future. The principles of sustainable forestry are used to assure that the forest can, and will continue to provide a full range of benefits to the people and visitors of Wisconsin. Although some practices differ between a state park and a northern forest, there is plenty for you to enjoy at each one!

Your Role in the Master Planning Process

DNR planners and staff are in the middle of a multi-year planning process which will result in a management plan, or Master Plan, for this forest. The Master Plan will be based on an integrated approach to management which will include sustainable forestry, wildlife, fish and non-game management as well as the development of recreational activities such as hunting, snowmobiling, hiking and cross-country skiing- activities which currently take place on these lands.

This intense process involves more than just DNR experts. There are other state agencies, town and county officials, local interest groups, neighbors, and the general public, who come together to decide what types of recreation and management should happen in the new forest. Public input is a key to the plan’s development. This is where you, the visitor, can make a difference in how the forest will look in the future. Common venues used to engage the public include open house meetings, website comment forms, and public hearings. For more information on the state forest master plan and to be added to our mailing list, contact the forest headquarters, or visit us on the web at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us>. Navigate the DNR website by selecting ‘Forestry’ from the pull-down menu located in the upper right. Scroll down the green menu bar on the left and click on ‘State Forests’ under the ‘Forest Lands’ heading. Select ‘Master Planning’ and you will see a link to the Peshtigo River State Forest in the list.

During the planning process the DNR will continue to promote public recreation and protect the natural features found on this former WPS property.

Information

Peshtigo River State Forest
N10008 Paust Lane
Crivitz WI 54114
715/757-3965

Normal business hours are Monday–Friday: 8:00 am–4:30 pm. We are a field office; hours and days may vary. Please call ahead.



What About Our Neighbors?

Governor Thompson State Park

The Governor Thompson State Park is nestled between the Peshtigo River State Forest lands on the south shore of Caldron Falls Flowage in Marinette County, about 15 miles northwest of Crivitz. The park is approximately 2600 acres in size and is open 6am-8pm daily for year-round visitation. There is currently no overnight camping and use of motorized vehicles, horses or pedal bikes on the park is prohibited. Visitors to the park may utilize the trail network on the property to hike, snowshoe, cross-country ski, and nature watch. The park also has access to 2 small inland lakes, ponds, and many miles of streams for fishing or non-motorized boating. Motor boats may be launched from Boat Landing 13 on the flowage or visitors could try paddling through the wind protected South Bays from BL 13. The park shares the shoreline of Caldron Falls Flowage with the Peshtigo River State Forest. Over 6 miles of Caldron’s

shoreline is in the park.

The park has many plans for future development including new roads, trail systems, picnic areas, group and family campgrounds. Every year visitors will see the park continue to change and become more of a recreational partner to the state forest. To view the development maps for the park please check us out on the WDNR website at

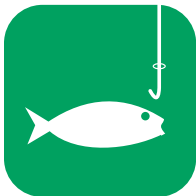
http://dnr.wi.gov/master_planning/completed_archive/parks_trails/index.htm.

Visitors to the park will need to purchase either a daily or annual admission sticker at the park entrance off Ranch Road. At this time, there are no fees to use Boat Landing 13 Road. Make plans to explore and enjoy your new state park. To contact the park, please call 715-757-3979 or email the manager at maggie.kailhofer@dnr.state.wi.us.



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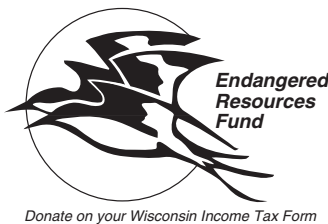
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Fishing

For the angler who likes variety, the Peshtigo River State Forest is the place for you! High Falls and Caldron Falls offer excellent angling opportunities. Caldron Falls, a 1,100 acre flowage which supports a high quality muskellunge fishery and is the only “Class A” rated muskie water in Marinette County. Other fishing opportunities here include large and smallmouth bass, walleye, bluegill, rock bass, yellow perch, black crappie, and pumpkinseed. At High Falls, which encompasses a 1,500 acre flowage, also supports an excellent fishery of walleye and large and smallmouth bass. Major panfish species include bluegill, rock bass, yellow perch, black crappie and pumpkinseed. At Johnson Falls, a smaller flowage at 158 acres, boasts gamefish such as northern pike, large and smallmouth bass, walleye, muskellunge, brown trout and rainbow trout. The Bagley (281 acres) Flowage includes northern pike, smallmouth bass and walleye. There are also a number of panfish including rock bass, bluegill, pumpkinseed, black crappie and yellow perch.

A 5-mile stretch of the Peshtigo River, between the Johnson Falls dam and the base of Spring Rapids, is designated as a trout fishery with special regulations that apply. Only artificial lures may be used for all species and the daily bag limit is 2 trout. For a complete set of regulations consult the most current issue of “Trout Fishing Regulations and Guide.” Along this designated stretch of river anglers find not only trout, but northern pike, walleyes and smallmouth bass. In addition to being an excellent fishing spot, it also offers some great Class I-II rapids for canoeists and kayakers.



Boating

There are a total of 16 landings in the Peshtigo River State Forest. 6 are located on Caldron Falls, 7 on High Falls, 2 on the Peshtigo and Bagley Flowages, and 1 on Johnson Falls (small watercraft recommended). No fee is required to use the boat launches, however, boats may not be left moored, anchored, or unattended at any state forest landing.



Cross-Country Skiing & Hiking

During the winter months, all of the state forest is open to cross country skiing but the property does have a groomed ski trail network in place. The state forest, along with Marinette County, some private land-owners, and the Marinette County Cross Country Ski Club Association operate 30 km of regularly groomed ski trails. These trails are groomed for both traditional and skate skiers. 13 km runs through the state forest, and connects to the other 17 km that run through county forest land and private land. There are two trailheads: the Spring Rapids Trail Head is roughly 1 mile off of Kirby Lake Lane. The Seymour Rapids Trail head is approximately 2 miles off of Bushman Road. No trail passes are required for these trails.

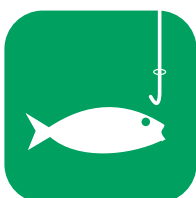
During the summer months, these trails double as designated hiking trails. When using these trails visitors will have the opportunity to encounter a wide range of flora and fauna. In addition, there are many hunter walking trails throughout the forest to enjoy.



Snowmobiling & ATV Riding

There are roughly 20 miles of groomed snowmobile trails to enjoy within the state forest and around 1300 additional miles which can be found in region.

Many of these trails are open to ATV use, but during winter months only. The state forest does not have any designated ATV trails at this time, except for a small portion off of Johnson Falls Road. Regionally there are 400 miles of trails in existence. Because it is illegal, please do not ride ATVs anywhere other than on a designated trail during the allowed time period.



Other Recreational Opportunities

Although no designated trail system exists within the forest equestrian riding and off road biking are allowed on logging roads, “volunteer trails,” off-season snowmobile trails and cross-country ski trails, and hiking trails.

Wildlife viewers have plenty to look for on this state forest. Bald eagles and osprey are often seen along the Peshtigo River diving for food or guarding their territory. Deer, bear, turkey, ruffed grouse, Sandhill cranes, Canadian geese are some of the wildlife commonly viewed in the forest.

“Remember...Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!”



Safe Campfire: Solely used for cooking and warming. Only clean dry wood is allowed!



Unlawful Campfire: Used for eliminating garbage or trash. Oily substances, plastic, rubber, aluminum, treated paper or cardboard is not allowed!

Thunder River Rearing Station

Chances are you have not been to a fish rearing station before. Is it different from a fish hatchery? You bet’cha! Fish eggs are hatched at a fish hatchery but once they reach a certain size, they are transferred to rearing stations. They are kept in rearing ponds until they reach the appropriate size and then are released into area lakes.

Our Brown trout are brought in from the Wild Rose Fish Hatchery. Each May the station receives about 200,000 fry, or immature fish, measuring about 2 ½ inches long. Once they reach 7 inches, usually in the fall, they are stocked into Green Bay and Lake Michigan. The other types of fish reared at Thunder River are Coho salmon. Approximately 100,000 fry are brought in from the Lake Mills Hatchery

in October when they are 5 inches long. They are reared in the ponds over the winter and planted in Lake Michigan in the spring.

Visiting our rearing station offers a great opportunity learn more about the Department of Natural Resources fisheries program and see the fish that go into our public waters. The best time to come and see the trout would be from May through October and the salmon in October. The rearing station is open from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., seven days a week from May until October. Call ahead to request a tour for groups at: 715/757-3541. Our address is W13562 Hatchery Road, Crivitz WI 54114.

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Campfire Safety

If a fire is desired and conditions are favorable, use an existing fire ring or charcoal grill.

1. Keep tents and gear at least 10 feet away from the fire.
2. Never leave your campfire unattended and always have a shovel and bucket of water on site.
3. When finished, drown your campfire thoroughly with water and stir the ashes.
4. Scrape all embers off of the partially burned sticks and logs.
5. Check the entire area outside the campfire circle for any hot embers. Remember that it only takes one spark or ember to start a forest fire!
6. Add more water to your fire and stir again until it’s cold.

Paddling on the Peshtigo

Abundant whitewater and quietwater paddling opportunities exist on the Peshtigo River, surrounding rivers and streams. The Peshtigo River enters the state forest boundary north of Caldron Falls Flowage. Here the water is fairly calm with only a slight current. This is an excellent area for both canoeists and kayakers as there are many bays to paddle in and out of. As the water enters Caldron Falls, the current lessens. Caldron Falls is a popular flowage for anglers and other water recreational users. Canoeing the flowage takes approximately 4 hours.*

There is a short portage around the Caldron Falls dam to the High Falls Flowage. Here the river narrows and the current remains fairly calm for a small period as you paddle by private homes and restaurants. Once the river, widens as you enter the flowage, be cautious of power boaters and jet skiers as this is a popular activity in this area. This flowage is also good for canoeists and kayakers with the many bays to investigate. Canoeing the flowage takes approximately 4.5 hours. *

After portaging around the High Falls dam, the river enters the smaller Johnson Falls Flowage with very calm currents. **If you are looking for a camping adventure, 3 canoe campsites are available on this flowage. Watch for the “Canoe Campsite” sign on land to find the sites.** Canoeing flowage takes approximately 2.5 hours. *

The river gathers speed after paddling through the Johnson Falls dam, marking the start of Seymour Rapids and Spring Rapids. In addition to being an excellent trout fishery, it offers some great Class I-II rapids for canoeists and kayakers. 7 canoe campsites are available on this portion of

the river. Watch for the signs on land to find the sites. Please see the camping rules for these sites on the next page.

Rapids Classification

The following ratings are based on the International Scale of River Difficulty (ISRD), as described in *Whitewater; Quietwater* 1. The rapids and their locations are indicated on the map.

These ratings are intended to give the canoeist an idea of what to expect along the river. The water levels along the river can fluctuate. It is important for the canoeists to be aware of river conditions an the seasonal variations that occur. The Department does not monitor the river for these changing conditions and cannot guarantee the accuracy of the ratings for any given time. Please be careful, use common sense, and enjoy your paddling trip on the Peshtigo River.

1 Palzer, Bob and Jody, *Whitewater; Quietwater*, 8th edition, 2nd printing. Birmingham, AL: Menasha Ridge Press, 2001.

Class I Easy: Riffles, small, regular waves. Easy to find course. Minor obstacles. Beginner paddler.

Class II Medium: Fairly frequent but unobstructed rapids, usually with regular waves, easy eddies and bends. Novice Paddler.

Class III Difficult: Characterized by numerous high, irregular waves covering boat. Course not easily recognizable, requires maneuvering in rapids. Intermediate Paddler.

*Depending upon weather and water levels, canoe times are approximate.

Don’t forget about our Wildlife & Natural Resources Areas...

Two great Wildlife areas in the area include the Lake Noquebay Wildlife Area and the Peshtigo Harbor Unit–Green Bay West Shores. Both locations offer an opportunity to take pride in Wisconsin’s treasured wildlife areas. Escape from your daily routine with a visit and hike amidst the marshes, forests, and uplands and enjoy the natural beauty of Wisconsin.

Lake Noquebay Wildlife Area includes 1300 acres of state-owned land. It is located 13 miles northeast of Crivitz and can be accessed off Highways X and W. Principal wildlife in the area includes waterfowl, ruffed grouse and deer. Additional recreational activities include hiking and birdwatching.

The Peshtigo Harbor Unit was established in 1954 and includes 3,660 acres of state-owned land. The area is about 5 miles southeast of Peshtigo. Principal wildlife and recreational opportunities are also similar to Lake Noquebay, except at the Peshtigo Harbor visitors have access to fishing along the river. For information on these two properties, please contact the Peshtigo DNR at 715/582-5000.

The Menominee River Natural Resources Area was donated to the DNR in 2000 by the Richard King Mellon Foundation. This property is located in northeastern Marinette County and includes 1,962 acres on the Wisconsin side of the Menominee River. This property also includes 2,530 acres that was donated to the Michigan DNR and now encompasses the Escanaba State Forest in Michigan. This property is located in northeastern Marinette County, with the closest town being Pembine. The primary game species are ruffed grouse and whitetail deer. This property also provides multiple forms of recreational opportunities such as camping, canoeing, hiking, fishing, hunting, trapping, bird watching, berry picking or sight seeing. For more information on the Menominee River Natural Resources Area, please contact the property manager at (715) 856-9160 or visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/facilities/menominee/index.html>.

Respect Wildlife*

Observe wildlife from a distance that they consider safe. Use binoculars, spotting scopes, and telephoto camera lenses to get a closer look. A car or drifting canoe makes a good viewing blind. If animals stop eating, look at you with heads up or ears pointed toward you, or if they appear nervous or “skittish” when you move or make a noise, you are definitely too close for their comfort. Either sit down quietly or move slowly away until their behavior relaxes.

Don’t feed the animals*

Feeding wildlife can be harmful... to them and to you! Animals that become accustomed to receiving handouts, such as in a campground, tend to frequent these areas. Hand-fed animals can become aggressive or annoying to people. Migratory birds may tend to stay longer in the winter when they really would be better off in southern climates. And mammals that hibernate may not gain the proper weight due to the poor nutrition which most human handouts provide.

 **Do You Know Someone with Special Needs?**

The Department of Natural Resources is making an effort to provide accessible park and forest recreation facilities for people with special needs. We would like to hear from you regarding this effort and welcome your suggestions and comments.

Presently, there are disabled fishing access locations at Boat Landings 1, 5, 6, 7, and 8. If you are using these facilities, we would like to know what your opinion is, what you like and don’t like, or any suggestions you have. Please write to us at N10008 Paust Lane, Crivitz WI 54114.

Canoeing and River Camping Tips

- Canoeists, kayakers, anglers and other users appreciate and respect the Peshtigo River for its natural beauty. Adhering to the river regulations of the Peshtigo River State Forest will provide a positive and enriching experience while on the river.
1. Camping is allowed at designated canoe campsites for one night only. Users must travel by watercraft, no walk in camping.
 2. There is no drinking water available at the campsites or at any of the landings. Please bring your own water.
 3. There are no garbage containers on the river. **Pack out all refuse. Do not litter.**
 4. Each camp area has a pit toilet. Please do not deposit litter in the toilets.
 5. Build fires in approved fire rings provided. Please use caution.
 6. Be sure to have approved flotation devices- one for each occupant.
 7. Dead and down wood may be used for firewood. Please do not damage standing trees.
 8. Keep noise to a minimum. Sound carries great distances on water. Have respect for other river users.
 9. Use extreme caution when nearing, or portaging around, the dams. Currents are unpredictable and quite powerful. Respect warning lights and sirens when using the area around the dams. These signals warn to watch for open dam gates and changing water levels.

Carry In / Carry Out

Welcome to your state forest! You’ll notice a change in the picnic areas, shelters, beaches, and other day-use areas...no garbage or recycling bins.

From now on, when you visit many Wisconsin state parks, forests, and recreations areas, you’ll need to take your garbage and recyclables home with you.

Why the change?
Home away from home: The parks and forests belong to all of us and just like home we need to care for them and keep them clean.

Less mess: Removal of the garbage and recycling containers eliminates the smells and mess they create. It also cuts down on yellow jackets and other pests.

Reduce, reuse, recycle: Wisconsin state law requires us to recycle many materials we used to throw away. Better yet, we can make new choices of what to bring with us. The more reusable things we pack, the less garbage we’ll create. It’s good for us and for our earth home.

Thanks for helping out by carrying out what you’ve carried in.



Our Concern, Your Safety

The safety of forest visitors is a priority so please be careful at all times and please impress safety precautions on your children. Following are some precautions to keep in mind.

Boating All crafts must be equipped with a Coast Guard approved lifesaving device for each person aboard. Wearing these devices at all times is recommended. Do not overload your craft. Use extreme caution when operating near the dams and respect the warning lights and sirens when near the dams. Boaters should be aware of their wake and use caution when near other watercraft and steer clear of swimmers. Please consult the “Wisconsin Boating Regulations” for additional rules.

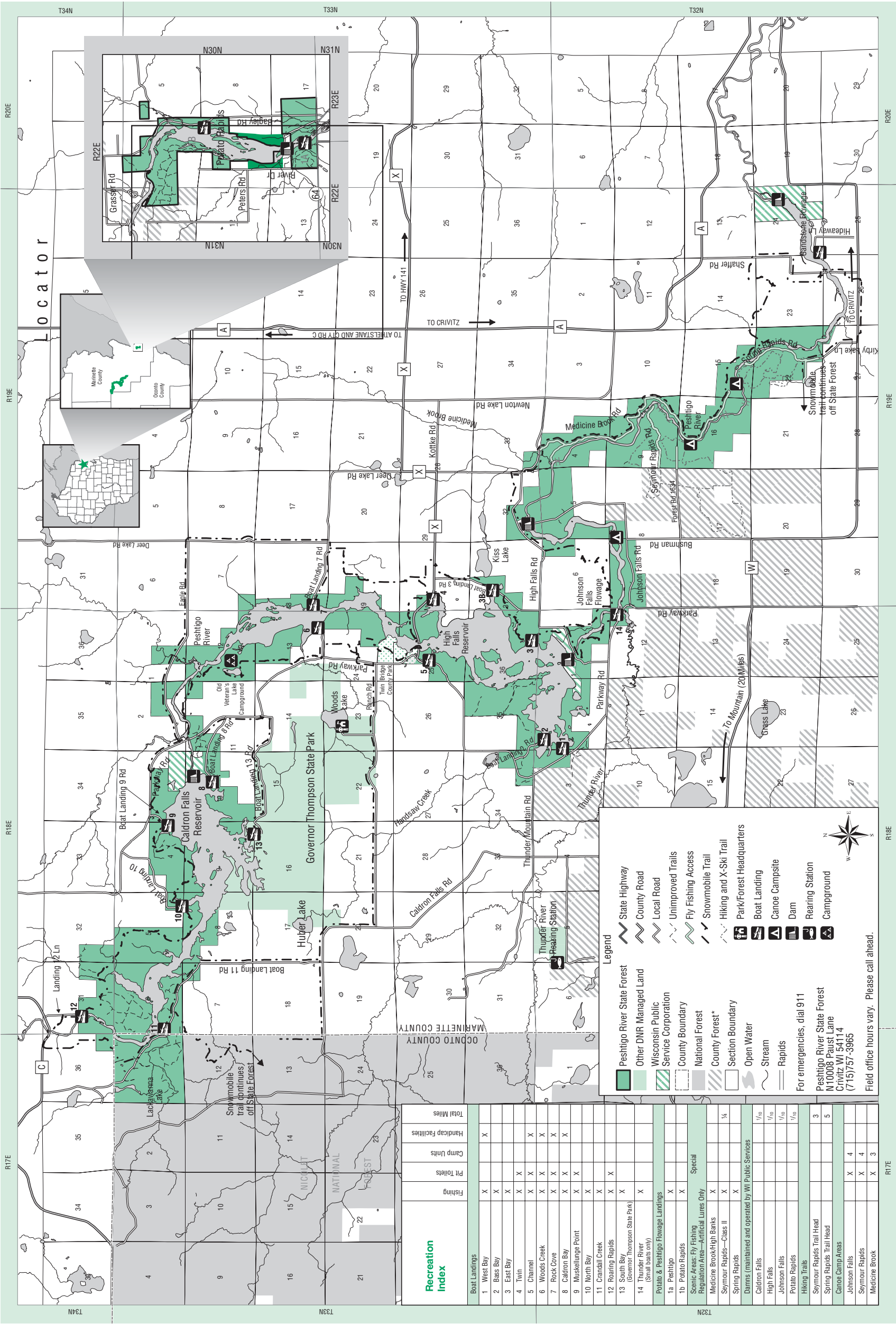
Hiking Please be aware that trails may very in difficulty. Stay well away from cliffs that aren’t protected by barricades. Trail surfaces may become slippery when wet or leaf-covered and can occasionally have loose sand, gravel or exposed rock.

Swimming There are no designated beaches in the Peshtigo River State Forest. Wherever you swim, don’t swim alone, at night, or in unfamiliar places. Do not dive from bridges, high banks, or into water of unknown depths. Stay clear of all dams; currents are unpredictable and quite powerful. Use caution when wading into unknown waters, as water depth may change abruptly. Children should be watched closely when near the water. Public beaches are available at Twin Bridges County Park, the Town of Stephenson Park, and Badger Park in Peshtigo.

Plants Never eat berries or plant parts unless you are certain of their identity.

Fires Fires are only allowed in designated fire rings. Fires in any other location other than a fire ring are extremely dangerous. Fires cannot be left unattended. Make sure your fire is Dead Out before leaving.





Peshtigo River State Forest



The data shown on this map have been obtained from various sources, and are of varying age, reliability, and resolution. This map is not an authoritative source of information about legal land ownership or public access.

*Due to scale and processing limitations, some County Forest parcels depicted on the map are shown as full 40-acre units. In reality, actual County Forest acreage amounts may be much smaller than 40 acres.



Emergency Contact Information

Peshtigo River State Forest	715/757-3965
Marinette County Sheriff	911 or 715/732-7600
Oconto County Sheriff	911 or 715/834-6900
Forest Fires: DNR Office	Peshtigo- 715/582-5000
Bay Area Medical Center, Marinette (Hospital with an ER)	715/735-6621
Bay Area Medical Clinic, Crivitz	715/854-3823

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